

BURUNDI

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, Burundi is a country that should receive much greater attention from this Congress and the Obama administration in the months and year ahead. As many of my colleagues will recall, Burundi was devastated by political violence throughout the 1990s, leaving over 100,000 people dead. Yet with the mediation of the late Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere and then South African President Nelson Mandela, and the active engagement of President Clinton, a peace agreement was finally signed in August 2000. Several armed groups refused to accept the agreement, but they were brought into the fold over subsequent years. And in 2005, Burundi held multiparty national and local elections, a major milestone on its transition to peace.

In 2010, Burundi is set to hold its next round of elections. These elections have the potential to be another milestone in Burundi's path toward reconciliation, lasting stability and democratic institutions. Over the last 4 years, Burundi has made significant progress in that direction. However, there are still persistent tensions within Burundian society, which could be strained during this electoral period.

Despite all the progress that has been made, Burundi remains a fragile state and regularly appears on watch lists of countries vulnerable to internal conflict. For example, the Brookings Institution's Weak States Index last year listed Burundi as the fifth weakest state in the world, behind Iraq, the DRC, Afghanistan, and Somalia. Moreover, according to the U.N. Human Development Index, Burundi continues to be one of the poorest countries in the world.

I have been particularly concerned by reports that both the Burundian government and the armed opposition Forces for National Liberation—FNL—continue to resort to violence, intimidation and repression. According to the State Department's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices," members of the army, the police, and the National Intelligence Service were responsible for killings, torture, and beatings of civilians and detainees in 2008, although there were fewer such reports than in the previous year. Human Rights Watch has documented a number of abuses committed against democratic political opponents by state agents and unofficial proxies in the first few months of 2009. Meanwhile, the FNL reportedly continues to abduct civilians and use violence against local officials.

In the run-up to the 2010 elections, it is quite possible that these abuses and killings will increase as the parties compete for political power. Therefore, it is critical that the international community speak out now against human rights violations and the importance of maintaining the rule of law. We need to press the Burundian government to ensure it is not partici-

pating in any abusive behavior and help it to improve the independence and capacity of its judicial institutions. We also need to engage with and help strengthen the Electoral Commission so it can guard against any manipulation actual or perceived of the electoral process. Finally, we need to continue working with the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and the new Partnership for Peace in Burundi to advance disarmament and demobilization, transitional justice, reconciliation and development efforts. Burundi's peace process has come a long way, but the process is far from complete.

The United States has a unique role to play in these efforts. Because of our role in helping to broker the Arusha peace accord, the United States has significant good will in Burundi and is seen by many as a credible arbiter. In the years since, we have continued to work with regional stakeholders in support of peace. In the months leading up to Burundi's election, we need to increase that support and amplify our voice against abuses and political violence. I know President Obama's nominee to be our next ambassador to Burundi, Ambassador Pamela Slutz, understands these challenges and I look forward to working with her. Working together, regional leaders and the international community can help Burundians avert an electoral crisis and keep the peace process on track.

COMMENDING RICHARD "DICK" PEMBROKE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to salute Richard "Dick" Pembroke, of North Bennington, VT, for his years of service and dedication to the State of Vermont.

Dick has been chosen as this year's honoree at the fourth annual Living History Day that will be held August 9, 2009. Dick's friends and family will pay tribute to him in downtown Bennington, for his many achievements and contributions to Bennington and to the State of Vermont.

I have had the good fortune to have known Dick for many years. Born and raised on a family farm in my hometown of Montpelier, Dick and I also share St. Michaels College in Vermont as our alma mater. He is a good friend and I am delighted for him and the recognition that he is being given.

In honor of Dick Pembroke, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the Bennington Banner's story, "Pembroke will be honored August 9 as 'Living History,'" be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Bennington Banner, July 23, 2009]
PEMBROKE WILL BE HONORED AUGUST 9 AS
"LIVING HISTORY"

NORTH BENNINGTON.—Richard "Dick" Pembroke of Harrington Road will be this year's honoree for the fourth annual Living History Day to be held on Aug. 9 in front of Powers Market.

A different resident is chosen each year to be recognized for their achievements and contribution in shaping the local community. The two-hour event offers others a venue to share stories about the honoree and enjoy time with neighbors and friends. In addition to stories, there will be music, Kevin's hot dogs and much more. The event takes place from noon to 2 p.m., is free and open to all ages.

Pembroke has lived a spiritually rich and diversified private and public life. He was the eldest of four children, born and raised in Vermont on the family farm in Montpelier. He attended St. Michael's College in Winooski and subsequently served in the Navy during the Korean War and afterward, from 1951 to 1955. He met and married his wife, MaryAnn, while stationed in Pensacola, Fla. Upon returning to Vermont a short time later, he was employed at the First National Grocery Store Corp.

Pembroke managed several stores before opening one in Bennington in 1962. His love of horticulture and the outdoors was insatiable. To fulfill this passion, he began a landscaping business on the side, which gradually grew. In 1973, he left the grocery business and directed his full attention to Pembroke Landscaping.

Being the father of one daughter and three sons kept him busy and involved with loyal education. Pembroke coached Little League and helped to construct the local Little League park. He was also a member of the Mount Anthony Union High School Booster Club from 1973 to 1980 as well as other school organizations. Pembroke joined the Lions Club in 1957 and was involved with building the current Lions Field. He was a member of the University of Vermont board from 1980 to 1986, director for the American Red Cross and a member of the Knights of Columbus since 1963. He served on the Bennington Zoning Board of Adjustment from 1975 to 1987 and was chairman for 11 years.

In 1986, he discovered another avenue of public service that suited him quite well: He was elected to the Vermont House of Representatives, where he was chairman of the House Transportation Committee for 12 of the 16 years he served. He championed the construction of Route 279 in and around Bennington and worked diligently on many infrastructure projects related to safety and economic development.

In 2006, he was voted chamber of commerce person of the year. "Retirement" is not a word in Pembroke's vocabulary. He continues to keep a foot in the door of Pembroke Landscaping and currently sits on the State Environmental board as well as trustee/director of the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING EDDIE LEE PEPPE

• Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, today I honor Mr. Eddie Lee Pepple, varsity basketball coach at Mercer Island High School, in retiring after 52 years of faithful service to our Nation and our youth. His distinguished career has culminated as varsity coach at Mercer Island High School where he has taught basketball for 42 years, leading the team to win 4 Washington State AAA Championships, and inspiring thousands of young students.

Coach Pepple was born in Denver, CO. He graduated from the University of Utah in 1955 with a bachelor of arts

degree, and went on to serve in the Marine Corps from 1956–1957. He was the captain of the Quantico Marine Corps basketball team and Pendleton Marine Corps basketball team, winning a Marine Corps Championship with the Quantico Marines in 1956. He later earned his masters' degree in 1965 at Oregon State University.

He began his coaching career in 1958 as the varsity basketball coach at Fife High School in Washington State, where he led the team to a 4th place finish in the 1961 State Tournament. After 6 years of dedicated service to Fife High School, Coach Pepple went on to be the assistant coach at Meadowdale High School from 1964–1966, and then varsity coach at Mark Morris High School in 1967.

In 1968, Coach Ed Pepple began as varsity coach at Mercer Island High School, where he has led the team to 23 league championship tournaments, 4 final placements as State AAA Champions, and 13 second place finishes in the State championship tournament. His overall winning record during his tenure at Mercer Island High School is 78.8 percent after winning 882 of the 1119 games he has coached.

During these 52 years of devoted public service, Coach Pepple has been recognized by numerous organizations as an outstanding basketball coach and is nationally renowned for his inspiration, dedication, and success. In 1985, after leading Mercer Island High School to his first State AAA championship, Coach Pepple was awarded his first Coach of the Year Award by both the Kingco Conference, and the Washington State Interscholastic Basketball Association. He has since won the Kingco Coach of the year award five more times, and the Washington State Interscholastic Basketball Association award again in 1993.

In 1986, Coach Pepple was nationally celebrated when he received the Region 7 Coach of the Year award from the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, NHSACA. He received this award once again in 1993 and 1998. In 1998 Coach Pepple was also recognized by the NHSACA as the National Coach of the Year, one of the highest national awards a distinguished coach can receive. He has also served as the prestigious West Head Coach of the McDonald's All American Game, and served on the McDonalds All American Game Selection Committee for 17 years.

In 1997 and 1999, the Washington Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association also recognized Coach Pepple as the AAA Coach of the Year. He has been the chairman of this organization for the past 26 years. In total, Coach Pepple has been awarded 17 Coach of the Year awards and has been inaugurated into the Puget Sound Hall of Fame, the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association Hall of Fame, the Washington Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and most recently the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2006.

Upon his retirement Coach Pepple will be inaugurated into the Everett Community College Hall of Fame, and honored by the establishment of the Ed Pepple Coaches' Service Award by the Washington Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association, as recognition of his service to the Washington State basketball community.

It is through the commitment and sacrifice of Americans such as Eddie Lee Pepple that our young adults are able to thrive and succeed. He has bettered our communities in Washington State, and touched the lives of countless students through his dedication to coaching and teaching. I am proud to thank him, his wife Shirley, and children Terry, Jill, Jody, and Kyle for his honorable service to our Nation as a coach. I congratulate Coach Pepple and give my best wishes as he concludes his distinguished career. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that it has passed the following bills and joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2510. An act to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to reimburse States for the costs incurred in establishing a program to track and confirm the receipt of voted absentee ballots in elections for Federal office and make information on the receipt of such ballots available by means of online access, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2728. An act to provide financial support for the operation of the law library of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2749. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve the safety of food in the global market, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2913. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 301 Simonton Street in Key West, Florida, as the "Sidney M. Aronovitz United States Courthouse".

H.R. 3269. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide shareholders with an advisory vote on executive compensation and to prevent perverse incentives in the compensation practices of financial institutions.

H.R. 3326. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal

year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3435. An act making supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for the Consumer Assistance to Recycle and Save Program.

H.J. Res. 12. Joint resolution expressing support for designation of September 2009 as "Gospel Music Heritage Month" and honoring gospel music for its valuable and long-standing contributions to the culture of the United States.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 171. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for an event to honor military personnel who have died in service to the United States and to acknowledge the sacrifice of the families of those individuals as part of the National Weekend of Remembrance.

The message further announced that it has passed the following joint resolution (S.J. Res. 19) granting the consent and approval of Congress to amendments made by the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact, without amendment.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 194 of title 14, United States Code, Mr. OBERSTAR, Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the United States Coast Guard Academy Board of Visitors: Mr. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD of Maine, Ms. MAZIE K. HIRONO of Hawaii, and Mr. JOHN L. MICA of Florida.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The message further announced that the speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1107. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for a limited 6-month period for Federal judges to opt into the Judicial Survivors' Annuities System and begin contributing toward an annuity for their spouse and dependent children upon their death, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3357. An act to restore sums to the Highway Trust Fund and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills and joint resolution were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2510. An act to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to reimburse States for the costs incurred in establishing a program to track and confirm the receipt of voted absentee ballots in elections for Federal office and make information on the receipt of such ballots available by means of online access, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

H.R. 2728. An act to provide financial support for the operation of the law library of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

H.R. 2749. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve